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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 005014

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [KWBG](#) [IS](#) [GAZA](#) [DISENGAGEMENT](#) [SETTLEMENTS](#)

SUBJECT: YONATAN BASSEY: "WE'VE SEEN A REGRESSION IN
SETTLERS' VIEW OF DISENGAGEMENT"

REF: TEL AVIV 2207

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Gene A. Cretz for reasons 1.4 (b)
) and (d)

1. (C) Summary: Yonatan Bassey, Director of the Disengagement Authority (SELA), told Economic Counselor on August 9 that approximately 700 settler families are unprepared for the evacuations slated to begin early next week. He blamed the settlers' rabbis and community leaders for misleading the settlers. He cited Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu for convincing the settlers that "nothing will happen," and complained that community leaders have not given the settlers the appropriate guidance to negotiate with SELA and apply for compensation. Bassey commented, however, that the GOI knows exactly what will happen to the approximate 1,000 families who have applied for compensation, and estimated that an average family of five will receive over \$300,000 in compensation, depending on the size of its home and the ages of its members. End summary.

Settler Attitudes Regressing; Faulting
Rabbis, Settler Leaders

2. (C) Yonatan Bassey, Director of the Disengagement Authority (SELA), told Economic Counselor on August 9 that over the past days he has learned how rabbis can persuade "a group of innocent, rational workers" that disengagement will not take place. Bassey explained that Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu told settlers that disengagement would not occur and to stop making preparations to move. According to Bassey, Eliyahu told the settlers that if they were unsure whether he is right, they could pack their bags, but emphasized that he is "sure nothing will happen." Bassey predicted that this is going to be a problem for the settlers who are "sitting at home doing nothing."

3. (C) Bassey admitted that he has seen a regression in the settlers' view of disengagement in the last month. He said, "They don't understand what is the reality, they don't see it, it's psychotic," Bassey characterized the Gush Katif settlers as the most problematic, and noted that they are under a lot of pressure from their community leaders and rabbis not to talk to SELA or to make any preparations.

4. (C) Bassey continued that SELA's undercover psychologists are working day and night because many settlers are "close to suicide." He stated that there have been five heart attacks in Gush Katif over the last week from the stress the settlers are feeling, and noted that they are worried about finding jobs and not having enough money. Bassey blamed the community leaders for this because when the settlers were looking for guidance, "their leaders didn't tell them to prepare."

5. (C) Bassey also commented that he is afraid of the 2,000 "infiltrators" who have moved into the Gaza Strip (GS) or the Sa Nur settlement in the West Bank, but noted that he does not deal with the security aspects of disengagement. He predicted that the people who remain after the voluntary phase of the evacuation would be the ones who have arrived in the past two months. Bassey stressed that his concern is only for the residents, and remarked that SELA has hotel rooms ready for 2,000 settlers. He acknowledged that he had thought 30-40 percent of all settlers would have left before evacuation day, but admitted that only 50-100 families have vacated their houses so far and the GOI may not have enough hotel rooms available to house the evacuees.

Compensation Details

6. (C) Bassey added that regardless of whether some settlers have not prepared for the evacuation, the GOI has plans to care for the 1,000 families who have applied for compensation on the day, month, and year after disengagement. He estimated that 100 percent of the West Bank families, 70 percent from the northern GS, and about 40 percent from the southern GS have applied for compensation. (Note: If Bassey's estimates are correct, then 990 of 1,415 residents from the northern GS, and 2,257 of 5,944 residents from the southern GS have applied, based on reftel GOI population

figures. We count Netzarim as being in the southern GS. End note.) He calculated the compensation package for a family of five living in a 150-square meter house as:

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-- $1,000/square meter = $150,000
-- Land = $50,000
-- $1,000/family member for each year member lived in Gaza
  Father, 40 years old, assuming he was raised in Gaza =
$40,000
  Mother, 40 years old, assuming she was raised in Gaza =
$40,000
  Child, 15 years old, assuming s/he was raised in Gaza =
$15,000
  Child, 10 years old, assuming s/he was raised in Gaza =
$10,000
  Child, 5 years old, assuming s/he was raised in Gaza =
$5,000

-- Total compensation: $310,000
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17. (C) Bassey explained that settlers will pay \$50,000 for half a dunam of land in Nitzanim if that is where they are moving. He said that some settlers have still not decided if they want to build their houses individually, or if they want to collectively hire a construction company to build them all. Bassey speculated he will be working on this issue over the next six months.

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